

Sugar Coated Advice

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bismillaahi walhamdulillaahi was-salaatu was-salaamu 'alaa rasoolilaah
wa 'alaa aalihi wa sahbihi wa sallam, 'amma ba'd:



*"As you know, it is hard for the ego to accept the truth.
It is more so to accept it when it is presented
in a sharp manner."*

Mahmoud Ridha Murad received this golden piece of advice from Muhaddith Al-Albaanee (rahimahullaah) to which he was unable to utter a word in response. He said to himself, "if these were the only words of wisdom I learnt from this great scholar during my stay with him, they would have been more than sufficient for me to take home."



One of the tragic things which has become commonplace and has pervaded even those who are looked upon for knowledge, is a harshness when giving da'wah. It is as if naseehah is given on the condition that it must be accepted, and the giver of advice is seeking obedience and control, such that if he is mistaken in his advice, he would be expecting people to follow him in his mistake!

He knows one opinion about an issue of valid difference among the scholars and turns it into a hammer to bash people on the head with. He provides an evidence for his position, which if countered with another evidence, he brings his second



proof: **ANGER!** The questioner is fearful to question further to obtain a deeper understanding or to clarify some doubts. Some aversion creeps in his heart for the advisor and from then onwards he promises himself to rely on his own research – the internet, tapes and books.

From the nature of the human being is that when advice is given they cringe and find a rejection to it. In fact, the hardest person to give advice to is the person that continues to go around giving advice to others. And so from the hikmah that we see in the sunnah is that when someone wants to offer advice, that they find the best way that they can to offer that advice.

A sincere advisor must be kind, soft and well-mannered in giving naseehah to others, as this is a mighty tool in getting the desired response from the one he is advising. Kindness in giving advice, gentleness in exhortation and softness in speech was encouraged by the Prophet of Allaah (sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam) when he said:



"Kindness is not to be found in anything but that it adds to its beauty, and it is not withdrawn from anything but it makes it defective." [Muslim]

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So it's not the case that we want to compel others to follow our naseelah, bash them on the head with the advice, get out some anger and then leave, but rather we want to put a *sugar coating* around the naseelah so that it is easy for the person to swallow it. We want to sincerely guide towards goodness, without being a commander.



And the one who gets angry when giving naseelah should remember that Allaah says that this advice is something that when it is accepted, it is a ni'mah (favour) from Him and when it isn't, He hasn't given an individual the favour and the tawfiq (guidance) in accepting this advice. The Prophets would say as mentioned in the Qur'aan:

"And my advice will not profit you, even if I wish to give you good counsel, if Allaah's Will is to keep you astray. He is your Lord! and to Him you shall return." [Hud (11):34]

Bearing in mind that Allaah is the One who guides, should help extinguish that anger, which only causes people to flee. Allaah says:

"And by the Mercy of Allaah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you.." [Aali-Imraan (3):159]

An angry, unwelcoming, unapproachable caller who lacks people skills will find that his role as a caller will diminish day by day leaving him to wonder why he is not questioned anymore! So something that is often forgotten is that the acceptance of advice is tawfiq from Allaah and that our mission - what is asked of us by Allaah, is to simply convey the message in the best way, upon baseerah (evidence), hikmah (the sunnah), fair preaching and arguing in a way that is better.



We end this short naseelah, directing it primarily towards ourselves, hoping that it will receive attentive hearts, that Allaah will put barakah in it and with tawfiq from Him it will be a means of cleansing the bad characteristics that are hampering the da'wah to the Sunnah finding a home in the hearts of the muslimeen by saying:



O caller to Allaah! The only person you have control over, the only person you can change is yourself and the rest of mankind you do not have control of - so change that which you have control of by giving that knowledge with kindness gentleness and patience, and leave the guidance to the One who Guides. You are not more righteous than Musa (alayhis-salaam) and they are not more evil than Fir'awn, yet Allaah commanded Musa (alayhis-salaam) to:

"..speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear Allaah." [Taa Haa (20):44].

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wallaahu a'lam - wa sallallaahu 'alaa Muhammad wa aalihi wasahbihi wa sallam